



The Formentera Environment Department (FED) reminds landowners with pine trees that they are required, in light of growing local spread of the pine processionary, to make sure proper phytosanitary conditions are maintained among the trees. Islanders can alert the municipality to the presence of nests by means of the Línea Verde app, by contacting the Consell directly, or by visiting FED.

New telescopic shears and 5,000 munitions cartridges for nest removal

This year the Formentera government has purchased two long-handled pruning shears to remove nests at heights of five to six metres. Islanders who agree to certain conditions can borrow the shears at no charge from FED. Five thousand recently purchased ammunition cartridges will be distributed to local hunting groups who have traditionally joined in efforts to eliminate processionary nests.

“The Consell will do everything it can to make this easier for landowners”, said FED councillor Antonio J. Sanz, calling such individuals’ help “fundamental to combating the invasive pest”. Landowners are the ones responsible under municipal bylaws to remove nests, and Sanz said additional help is available to islanders who are unable to do so.

Wintertime signs of the pest’s spread in untreated areas include dry needles at branch tips and groups of caterpillars nesting for warmth. Pine processionaries are defoliators, meaning they feed on leaves, attacking pine trees and even causing serious damage if attacks are sustained or trees are already in a weakened state.

In the final months of 2020, the Healthy Forests Service of the Balearic division of natural spaces and biodiversity teamed up with the Consell de Formentera to perform targeted helicopter dustings of biological agent *Bacillus thuringiensis*.

Recommendations

FED and the Balearic Healthy Forests Service reminds islanders:

- 1.-If you see the processionary on the island, tell the appropriate authorities, noting where they are and how many nests you see.
- 2.-Remove nests from any affected pines.
- 3.-The most effective way to stop the processionary is to cut down nests and burn them.
- 4.-Take steps when removing nests to protect yourself from the caterpillar's urticating hairs. Wear long-sleeved shirts, gloves and protective eyewear.
- 5.-Because urticating hairs that come loose in the wind can cause breakouts or other dermatological reactions, nests should be removed with one's back to the wind.
- 6.-Once removed, nests must be destroyed. Forest services recommend burning them far removed from wooded areas to minimise the risk of fire.
- 7.-Caterpillars can also be crushed or shot (make sure you have a hunting permit and that seasonal hunting restrictions allow).

For more information visit the Healthy Forests Service at <http://sanitatforestal.caib.es> or contact the office by calling 971 17 66 66 or emailing

sanitatforestal@caib.es

. Visit FED (Àrea de Medi Ambient) at carrer Mallorca, 15 (baixos) in Sant Ferran de ses Roques, or contact the office at 971 32 12 10 ext.1 or

mediambient@conselldeformentera.cat

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Communications Department

Consell de Formentera